

DO: GACH BALL DE CEANTAR CATHRACH PHORT LÁIRGE
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE METROPOLITAN MUNICIPAL DISTRICT

TUAIRISC ÓN STIÚRTHÓIREACHT COMHSHAOIL
ENVIRONMENT DIRECTORATE REPORT

MEITHEAMH 2020
JUNE 2020

General Environment Enforcement

Environmental Inspectors continue to investigate and monitor illegal waste issues, littering, fly-tipping and illegal signage and issued litter fines where offences are detected.

Members of the public are encouraged to contact the local authority to report all incidents of illegal dumping or littering by using the following telephone number: 0761 10 20 20

Presentation / Parks & Open Spaces

Waterford City:

Measures introduced to prevent the spread of Covid-19 restricted some landscape works for the period from late March up to May 18th. Basic maintenance of our parks however was permitted in order to provide the public with a safe and presentable environment during this period. Some areas of park grass which would ordinarily been maintained or cut on a 10 day rotation was left to grow and flourish for a period of up to 7 weeks. This benefited and strengthened the biodiversity of our city, as while the grass flourished so also did all the flowering species within the grass get the chance to flower; provide an invaluable food source for the much threatened bee and insect life.

During this period the public had the opportunity to become more aware of the importance of biodiversity within the urban environs. Our grass cutting regime has commenced since May 18th however we have taken the decision to continue to promote a number of suitable temporary meadows within a number of the larger green areas. This approach will provide the residents with maintained green areas while also providing areas of biodiversity. The following areas have been allowed to continue to grow as meadows: Ring Road Verges, part of the Williamstown Road; Cherry Mount – Large green area at bottom of estate; Avondale – Large green area in middle of estate; . Kilcohan – Large green area at the front of the estate; Ursuline Court – Large green area at back of estate; Grace Dieu – Large area on the hill; Ferrybank Dual Carriageway central section; Rockingham Ferrybank- Large green area.

Whilst these areas are allowed to continue to grow, it is still important to ensure they are maintenance and therefore the appointed contractor will, as part of the overall cycle, carry out regular cutting of the perimeter areas, around the base of any trees and litter picks the entire area. As we go further into the summer these areas will provide less and less in terms of biodiversity value and therefore they will be cut and thereafter maintained in line with all other grass areas. This cutting and removing the grass is important in order to maintain the species

within these areas. The above areas have been chosen on the basis that they can be facilitated within, particularly the residential estates, and not entirely upon the variety of species important for biodiversity they contain.

Waterford City & County Council as a partner of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan is working towards the introduction of workable meadows within parts of our city. The events of this year have fast tracked us in this regard and it is proposed to further develop and strengthen initiative into the future.

The June bank holiday weekend is always a key date within our work programme in order to have the city presented in the best possible light and this year has been no different, staff completed summer seasonal planting at the Thomas Francis Meagher monument, planters at Reginald's Tower, John Roberts Square and the Folly roundabout. Weed control was carried out within the commercial part of the city centre, in advance of the most recent easing of Covid-19 restrictions the opening of retail premises. More recently staff have removed difficult to maintain planters on the approaches to the RSC roundabout. The roundabout has been re-landscaped with biodiversity in mind and has been sown in a wild flower meadow which will bloom shortly providing a variety of flowering species and interest. Currently staff are placing out, our hanging baskets along the street poles along The Mall and Quays.

Tramore:

Measures introduced to prevent the spread of Covid-19 restricted some landscape works however limited maintenance of the Town park and Inclusion Park was carried out in order to provide a space for recreation. Grass cutting was suspended for a period due to Covid-19, this however provided a great opportunity to strengthened the biodiversity of Tramore overall. Meadow areas which had been developed last year near the Back Strand; along part of the Ring Road; around the Inclusion Park and Splashworld and within the Doneraile proved to be successful this year.

Our works programme provided for summer seasonal planting around key focal points such as both churches, the Priest's Road car park, the planters through the main street and along Strand Road leading to the Promenade. The approaches to the town at our Welcome Signs have been planted using bee pollinator friendly planting. In the coming weeks hanging baskets will be erected from the GAA Club roundabout along the Branch Road and though to the centre of the town.

Environmental Education & Awareness

Green Schools Programme

As part of Waterford City and County Council's support of the An Taisce's Green Flag programme for schools, assessment visits for the next flag were ongoing until schools closed due to COVID-19. Advice continued via phone calls and emails (An Taisce are still accepting applications due to difficulties that schools are experiencing.) To date, a total of 25 primary and secondary schools in Co. Waterford have been awarded a Green Flag, including 10 schools from the Metropolitan area achieving a flag for their hard work on a range of themes from biodiversity, litter, waste, energy, water travel, etc. This achievement is a testament to the time, energy and hard work that the schools invests into this programme.

Anti Litter Campaign

A regional litter campaign is commencing on 20th June to highlight the effects of litter on our roadsides and to ask road users to bring their litter home with them. This will take place on social media and on local radio. It is hoped that this will help to reduce the amount of litter on our roadsides.

Bealtaine Festival of Outdoor Education.

A workshop which was due to take place at Waterford Nature Park as part of WIT CALMAST's Bealtaine Festival of Outdoor Education has been replaced with an online workshop on waste prevention, based around making a

reusable beeswax wrap at home. The online workshop was made available through CALMAST's website during the festival.

National Spring Clean

National Spring Clean is taking place at the moment instead of its usual time of the month of April. Community groups, youth groups, schools, Tidy Towns groups, etc are not holding their cleanup of their local area. Waterford City & County Council continue to offer assistance to the general public to clean up litter and illegally dumped waste from their local environs e.g. approach roads, local beauty spots, beaches and general public areas, in line with advice from the National Spring Clean office regarding COVID-19.

Clean Coast Programme

Coastal communities are being engaged with and supported in conjunction with An Taisce's Clean Coasts programme. Waterford City & County Council support groups by providing the clean up materials and collecting the bags of litter for disposal.

Climate Change

Climate change training workshops for community groups funded through the Local Environment Action Fund Local Agenda 21 are now taking place as online training courses with smaller groups of people over the autumn months and will be offered to any community group interested in learning how to take action about climate change at a local level.

Website

Environmental Information continues to be added to the Environment section of the Waterford City & County Council website which can be found at www.waterfordcouncil.ie